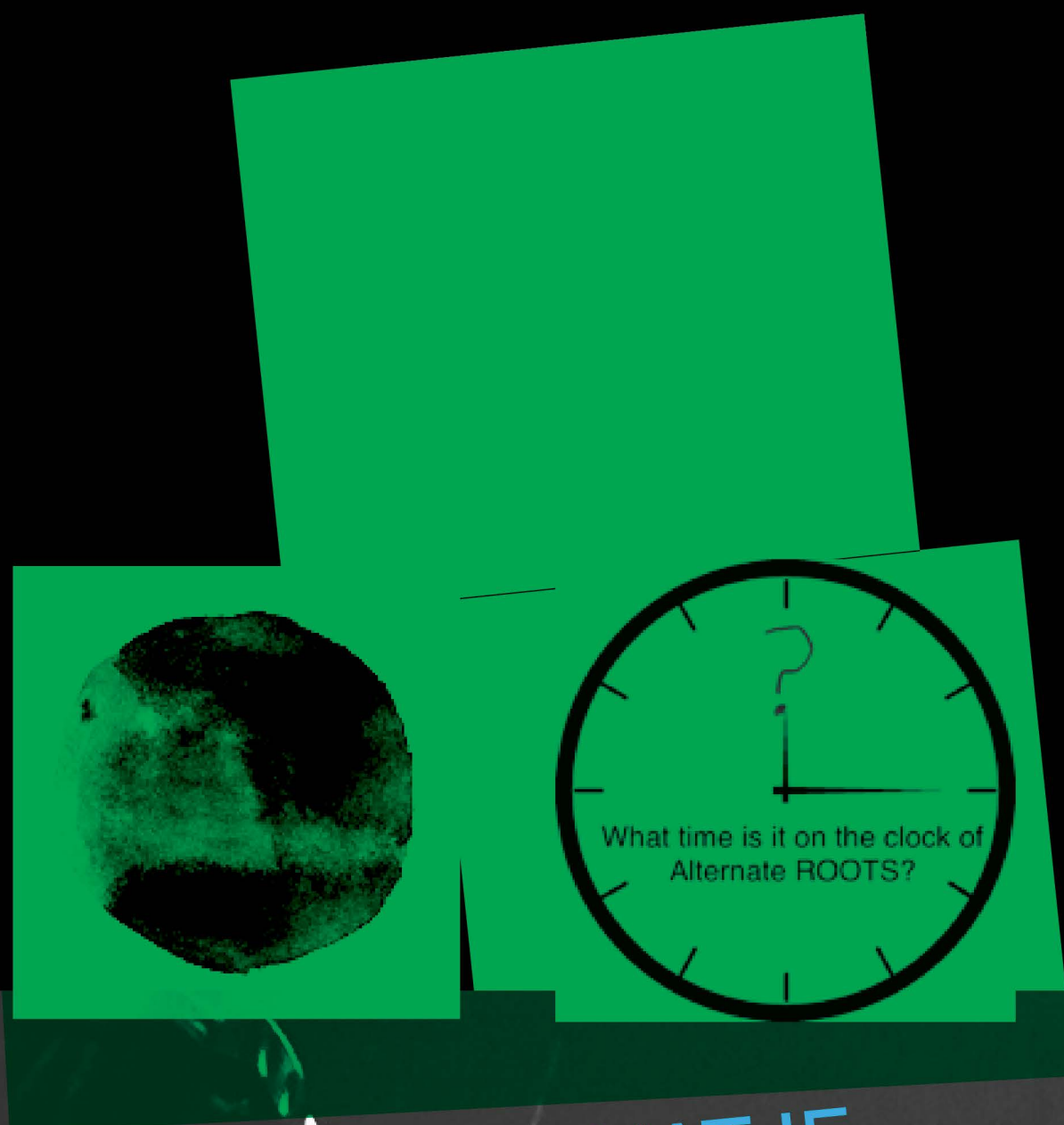


ROOTS COMMONS



the problem is not money, capital. The problem is exploitation.



WHAT IF.





Otra Vez**

Are you sure sweetheart, you sure you want to be well? asks Toni Cade Bambara

WHAT IS ROOTS ECONOMY ?

This year is positioned critically as a year of strategic planning for ROOTS, offering us an opportunity to perform what Toni Cade calls critical culture. Let's put money in its place and dream for an economy that de-centers money yet does not act like it doesn't exist, allowing us to move deliberately and with power for our collective well being.

Critical culture is our ability to step into a now moment where we know that a significant percentage of our ROOTS members are navigating a host of systemic inequities all rooted in capitalism. Inequity has nothing to do with how one can improve as an individual to avoid its whip. Inequity has everything to do with corrupt systems, outdated community values, and little to no visioning work done to collectively dream and shape with. Everything is design. says Una Lee of the Design Justice Collective. Values are at the heart of any design whether the values are intentionally or unintentionally chosen by its organizers/practitioners. Our freedom fighters teach us that it is a value to move strategically and with deliberation, being real about where we are right now and where we want to be, considering the health and well-being of the people.

Rasha spoke to the fact that 40% of ROOTS members that come to the annual meeting make less than \$ 20,000/year. muthi reed is one of those people. We could guess and say that many of that 40% are experiencing housing insecurity among other deeply rooted inequities. At the class keynote we heard a brief intro of stories revealing some of the levels to this dynamic in our community. A great start to a greater process. My question is do we just wanna talk about the issues or are we actually interested in visioning to shape economy in beloved community? What will it take to get us there?



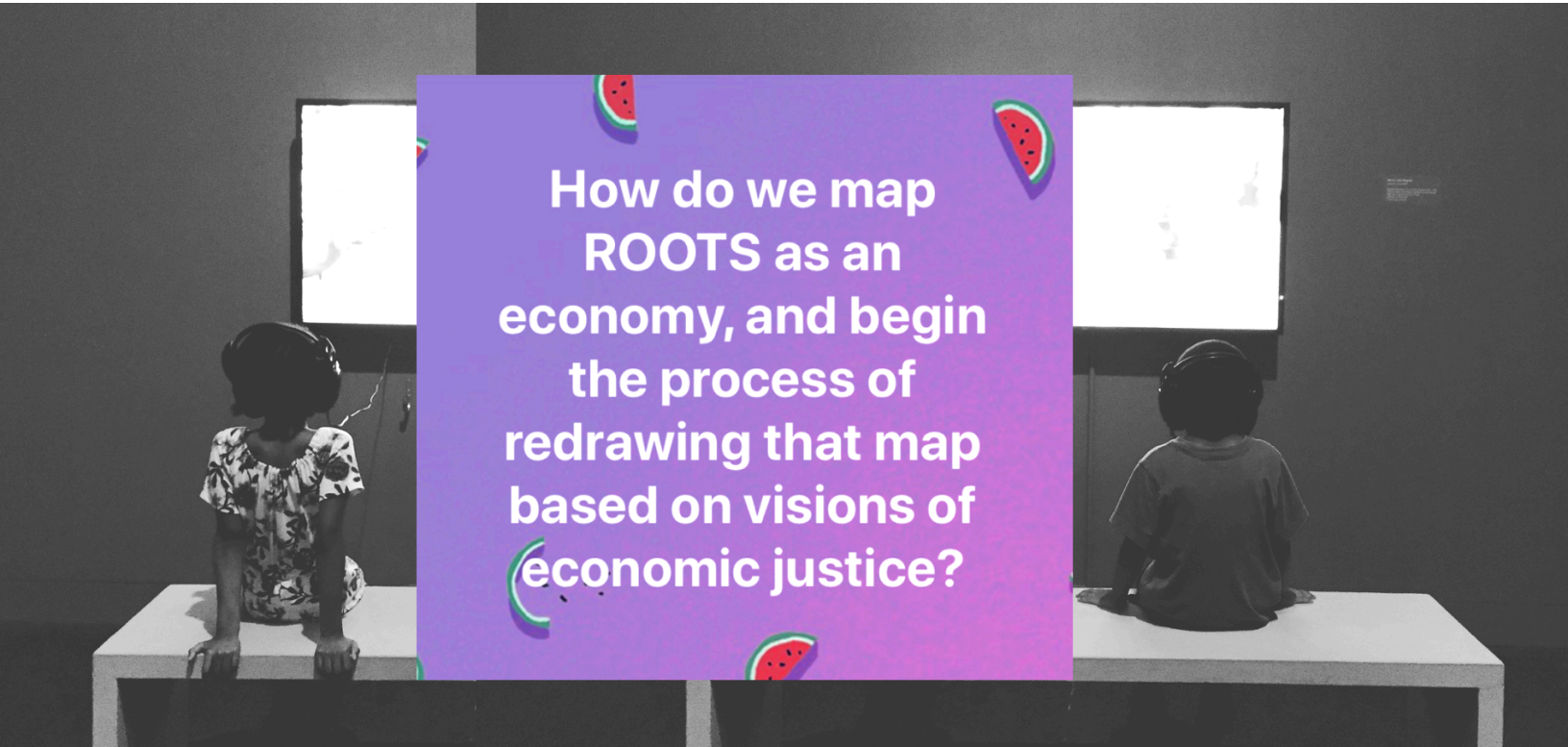
How does a system deliver for its people? asks Alice Lovelace

During this year’s keynote, Lauren Elysse mentioned that economy is more than dollars AND inclusive of dollars. Economy has creative power.

seed: what are ways we can care for each other as collective. Sharing our privileges. needs. abundance. vision. dreaming. relationship. world building. pleasure activism. creativity. well being. who are our roots? what are the needs and visions? how are we as roots members caring for one another inside our organization?

Because housing is not an emergency. Housing is a basic need that many people are unsuccessfully navigating because of deeply rooted inequities. Are y’all interested in building some value around and shaping an economy for housing security?

That we could barter. That we could reshape how we think about the value of what artists offer the world....



what if. What if when Angela Davis Johnson spoke of her struggles to house herself and her children someone provided her with a rent free home /or another alternate sustaining source so that she would not have to be enslaved to a landlord and paying rent every month. Angela stated that she lives painting-to-painting. With this type of exchange, Angela's wellness and her family's is determined. She could devote her painting efforts to her love for the art. I mentioned both last year at the annual meeting and this year during the keynote that my mother asked me to take responsibility for financing and maintaining her home. I accepted the responsibility and am figuring out month-to-month how I will pay the bills. I first migrated south from my hometown of Philadelphia in 2012 partly due to the fact that I had hit a ceiling there. I could not make enough money in my field to support myself without disavowing my personal values around health and wellness. I was working to pay bills. At the end of the year, I owed the government. In 2012 I began moving in an ancestral way, like my grandmother who migrated, a refugee coming up from the south to Philadelphia. In 2012 I became a tax resister. Regardless of my load as a freelance worker I am a broken beat in the wake of multi generational refugee relocations, alien abductions, crack, redlining, white flight, black love, gentrification, and displacement inequities on loop— i am still wondering how to pay the bill.

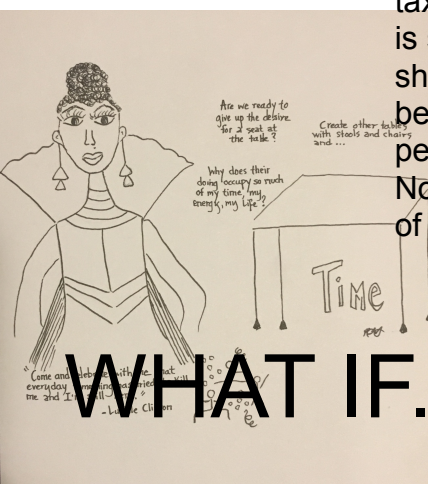


what if. What if ROOTS created investment in homes by acting as a land trust. This action on behalf of a non profit is building a value for people trans locally whose lands and homes are being threatened regularly by inequities inherent in capitalism. I was told to respect the land. And how we respecting the land if we not investing in it.

Community land trusts operate by removing land from the market, which permanently removes it from speculation and the amplification machine that housing and land in urban centers of ever-escalating worth and ever escalating pressures on surrounding neighbors and community members. Community land trusts encourage development without displacement, improve the housing stock, improve the amenities of the neighborhood but protect people from being pushed out from the success of their own communities.

***point being:
stop normalizing
redistributing
resources only during
moments of crisis.***

A ROOTER mentioned that another individual ROOTER helped finance her home after she made a public request. While that is a beautiful example of using one's privilege to benefit another, emotional labor is taxing. As we all witnessed in the class keynote, making public requests is some hard ass emotional labor. No one should HAVE to publicly share their hardships in order to meet their basic needs and we as beloved community have the power to both respond to the needs of the person and attend to why this condition is so pervasive in the first place. Note: Black folks are always doing this work due to the circumstances of HOW we embody in the culture.



***send sick folk money
to ease concerns
about what foods
they can afford that
day not just during
medical emergencies***

what if. What if ROOTS adapted an internalized system for processing its members asks, goods, services and anonymous donations for the benefit of its members and our communities. Marrying individual well being with collective well being, what in exchange do we have?

At the taco truck theater we all stood and shouted BLACK LIVES MATTER. BLACK TRANS LIVES MATTER.

Are those values for our ROOTS economy?

What does the implementation of those values look like? Let’s talk about money, what people need and what people have. This is all a part of the art making process. In these tensions are all the possibilities for diversity, equity, distribution, restoration and healing.

A few folks strategized to provide emergency \$\$ in a matter of minutes for Angela. How do we strategize as a collective, dreaming an economy for our people that meets emergency needs as well as needs for building cultural capacity and health?

Members have expressed needs and visions for their wellbeing. Yet these complexities are often not considered when building the strategies of the organization and its collective work. Why is our response to the complexities of member needs considered charity? Or too many people potentially taking advantage? Risk for abusing generosity? Evoking a need for business classes to teach professionalism? professionalism at what y’all ? capitalism!? Folk *been* making a way out of no way. Trust. What we need is healing and networks of care. Scarcity thinking keeps us firmly rooted in the plantation system. Redirecting resources and energy to new programs that support individual well being can help us get free. Answering the individual calls of members in crisis helps us be collectively free. The long and dirty work of peeling back the layers that create such needs, and reckoning with our complicity in it still has to be done.

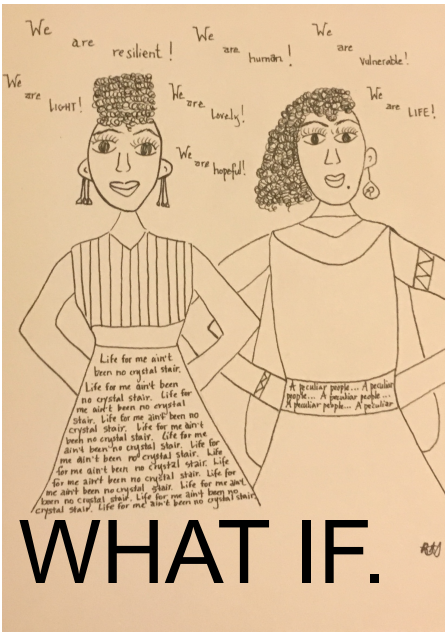
what if. What if ROOTS got real about its ability to create something different in the world? Let’s be real about ROOTS organization acting the role of being stuck on the plantation of the non profit industrial complex. Of course we will be stuck if we don’t move! ...if we don’t unpack and mobilize our sources and relationships! What does organizational power look like? Let’s acknowledge where we are and do something different. We have a brilliant legacy already y’all. ROOTS position is more solid than most non-profits both financially and in reputation including members for the next few years. Is now then the time to take risks? Be bold? Imagine? And even if we as a community aren’t ready for that, can we talk about what will get us ready for it. To look at the structures of inequity governing us AND to get to know the unique and diverse needs of ROOTS members. To shape an economy responsive to the unique and diverse needs of our members is revolutionary. It takes courage to deconstruct, decolonize and re map an ecology. Will funders align with values that are actively working to dismantle capitalism? How do we explain a culture of care as an economic system to center and invest in? We are valuable if we are willing to be truthful. said a ROOTS COMMONS member. Power is the ability to enact change. said another.

ECONOMY IS ...

WHAT IF ROOTS DEFINED OUR VALUES AS A COLLECTIVE?

Values make economy. What does ROOTS economy that builds towards justice *look like*? In the keynote on power, Keryl McCord gave us Dr. King’s definition of power and justice

“justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love.”



WHAT IF.



**send trans women
money for their own
leisure not only when
they experience
physical violence in
the streets**

We are a body that historically has wrestled with power internally and externally.

what if... What if we rooted our economic justice work in Love? Isn't that good sense?

This open letter is instigating an ecology of dissent. ROOTS feels stale because it talks about the shit in too much of a feel good way. The shit don't feel good when you catching the hell of it.

At the class keynote Yudith Nieto said, ***We have ancestral wisdoms.***

We know from Nayo Watkins that ***Everything we need is in our bones.***

Our ancestors created
mutual aid networks and strategies
collective work and responsibility
from each according to their need, to each according to their abilities
creative economy
solidarity economy
cultural power
We are our greatest resource. The people

The system working against folks created the myth that housing is a commodity or asset to accumulate value, rather than a shelter, sanctuary, and place to build a life within. That housing is a vehicle for profit, rather than a right. So if you cannot afford it then you must need to work on your personal finances. Those ideas are capitalist and imperialist.

again

Are you sure sweetheart, you sure you want to be well?

If we don't strategically plan the revolution then we are not a part of it.

what if...

what if...what if we worked to make tangible what feels impossible ?



thank you for being committed to participating in conversations in beloved community*
LISTEN IN FOR MORE COMMONS ASSEMBLIES

- ▷ [transubstantiation with Kim Pevia, Gwylene Galimard, Jean-Marie Mauclet, Sage Crump, muthi reed](#)
- ▷ [abolition and black surrealism with Kai Lumumba Barrow, Sage Crump, muthi reed](#)
- ▷ [indigenizing economy with Edyka Chilomé, Sage Crump, muthi reed](#)
- ▷ [critical exchange process with Gwylene Gallimard, muthi reed](#)
- ▷ [an opening manifesto for collective COMMONS by Sage Crump & muthi reed. May 2019](#)

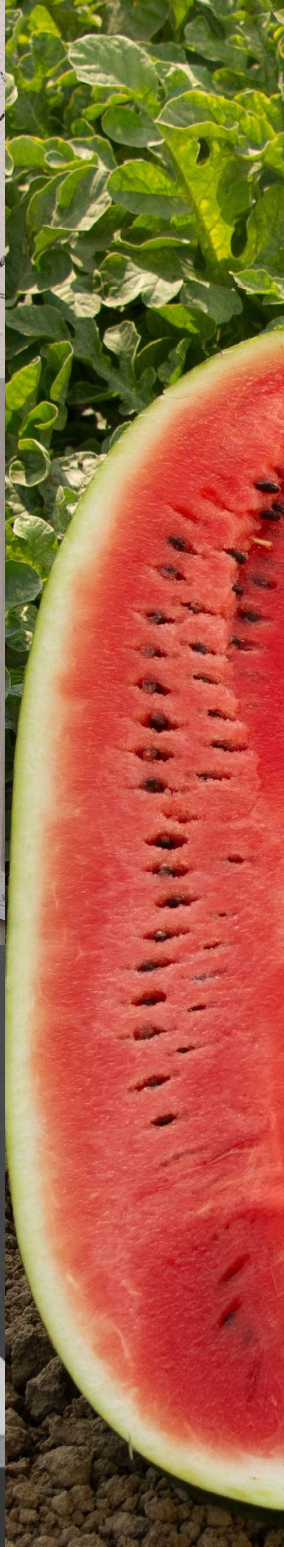
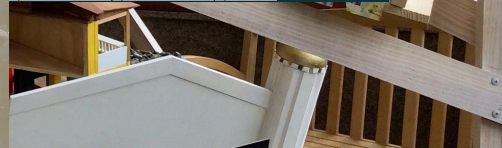
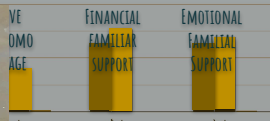
***send Black folk money
to go clubbing not
only after they
experience
catastrophic
anti-Blackness***





CAPITALISM RUINS EVERYTHING AROUND

"I am pleading in behalf of a strong, self-supporting colored conference on Northern territory, which is overwhelmed by the tidal wave of migration from the South, which has, within the last decade, moved the black belt of our urban colored population steadily northward, until to-day there is only one single Southern city, New Orleans, which can cope with our principal



add to the value economy glossary:

care

source

dignity

exploitation

#assembly #forjoy #smallscalebigimpact #restoration #socialcivilsociety #mewe #relationships #nesting #valuing

2019 September

COMMONS closing

join digital COMMONS

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2945093135508281/>

COMMONS— where the object of exploitation becomes its own subject and models its own forms of organization, responsibility, discourse, and political and social economy. A new distribution of senses – Poet Fred Moten from Poetics of Political Form

relationship to the state, constitution.

<http://www.geo.coop/collectivecourage>

organization mission—

Alternate ROOTS is an organization based in the Southern USA* whose mission is to support the creation and presentation of original art, in all its forms, which is rooted in a particular community of place, tradition or spirit. As a coalition of cultural workers we strive to be allies in the elimination of all forms of oppression. ROOTS is committed to social and economic justice and the protection of the natural world and addresses these concerns through its programs and services.

Pedagogy of the Decolonizing- Qu

<https://youtu.be/IN17Os8JAr8>

decolonizing

<https://soundcloud.com/sparkoffpodcast>

Always Already Ep. 57 - Sylvia Wynter, “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom” by Critical Mediations is licensed under a Creative Commons License.

<https://soundcloud.com/critmedia/aap-wynter>

Today's program was executive produced by Keisha-Khan Perry.

And as always in solidarity with the native, indigenous, African, and Afro-descended communities at Standing Rock; Venezuela; Cooperation Jackson in Jackson, Mississippi; Brazil; the Avalon Village in Detroit; Colombia; Kenya; Palestine; South Africa; and Ghana; and other places who are fighting for the protection of our land for the benefit of all people.

<https://soundcloud.com/africaworldnowproject/examining-the-continuities-of-antiblack-violence-in-brazil-and-the-us>

How do we map the Black Radical tradition? How can we understand its praxis? If we are to truly refashion the world...to make it better...to remake its institutions...to address its systemic inequities. Find justice. Seek peace. What language can we use to transmit it once we are able "see" it? What are the concepts that it will produce that will allow us to see the world differently? How can we codify the thoughts and practices in an effort to create a new vision of the world while simultaneously resisting the present?

<https://soundcloud.com/africaworldnowproject/fred-moten-the-undercommons-21st-century-resistance>

Ex.8 - Robin D.G. Kelley & Fred Moten in Conversation

<https://soundcloud.com/weareuoft/robin-d-g-kelley-fred-moten-in>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQHixAltclg&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.teenvogue.com/story/international-womens-day-2018-the-history-of-iwds-black-feminist-and-socialist-roots>

FEMINISM IS FOR EVERYBODY, Passionate Politics by bell hooks

https://excoradfeminisms.files.wordpress.com/2010/03/bell_hooks-feminism_is_for_everybody.pdf

PHILOSOPHY - Michel Foucault

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BBJTeNTZtGU>

Michel Foucault On Power

A key point about Foucault's approach to power is that it transcends politics and sees power as an everyday, socialised and embodied phenomenon. This is why state-centric power struggles, including revolutions, do not always lead to change in the social order. For some, Foucault's concept of power is so elusive and removed from agency or structure that there seems to be little scope for practical action. But he has been hugely influential in pointing to the ways that norms can be so embedded as to be beyond our perception – causing us to discipline ourselves without any wilful coercion from others.

<https://www.powercube.net/other-forms-of-power/foucault-power-is-everywhere/>

myths of globalization and no jobs

<https://www.facebook.com/eugene.skeef/videos/10156701016426131/UzpfSTYzMzE0NjEzMDoxMDE1NjcwMTAyMDc3MTEzMQ/>

Walter Rodney's legacy by Angela Davis

<https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/4127-walter-rodney-s-legacy-by-angela-davis>

How Europe Underdeveloped Africa

by Walter Rodney

Foreword by Angela Y. Davis

<https://www.versobooks.com/books/2785-how-europe-underdeveloped-africa>

Mississippi Freedom Labor Union

Future of work- how do artists make a living in this day

<https://www.fordfoundation.org/work/challenging-inequality/future-of-work-ers/>

Ep. 59 – Rosa Luxemburg, The Accumulation of Capital Part I

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/always-already-podcast-a-critical-theory-podcast/id879272845?i=1000425112107&mt=2>

https://www.jstor.org/stable/40212397?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

JOURNAL ARTICLE

Suppose James Brown Read Fanon: The Black Arts Movement, Cultural Nationalism and the Failure of Popular Musical Praxis

Michael Hanson

Popular Music

Vol. 27, No. 3 (Oct., 2008), pp. 341-365

Published by: Cambridge University Press

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/40212397>

Page Count: 25

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EyuKRwd5Lqg>

Stuart Hall on Gramsci

<https://youtu.be/RyZHXADwQn4>

<https://youtu.be/PPBjT8yDsc8>

<https://youtu.be/VpQC7iZrLOA>

<https://youtu.be/XtHs3QDLXbg>

Cooperation Jackson Brandon King tours

<https://youtu.be/TwB7XH7JUUn>

Nipsey Hu\$\$le on bitcoin currency

<https://youtu.be/KPAFgrSZhYQ>

Jay Z on climbing from the bottom to get to the top and why

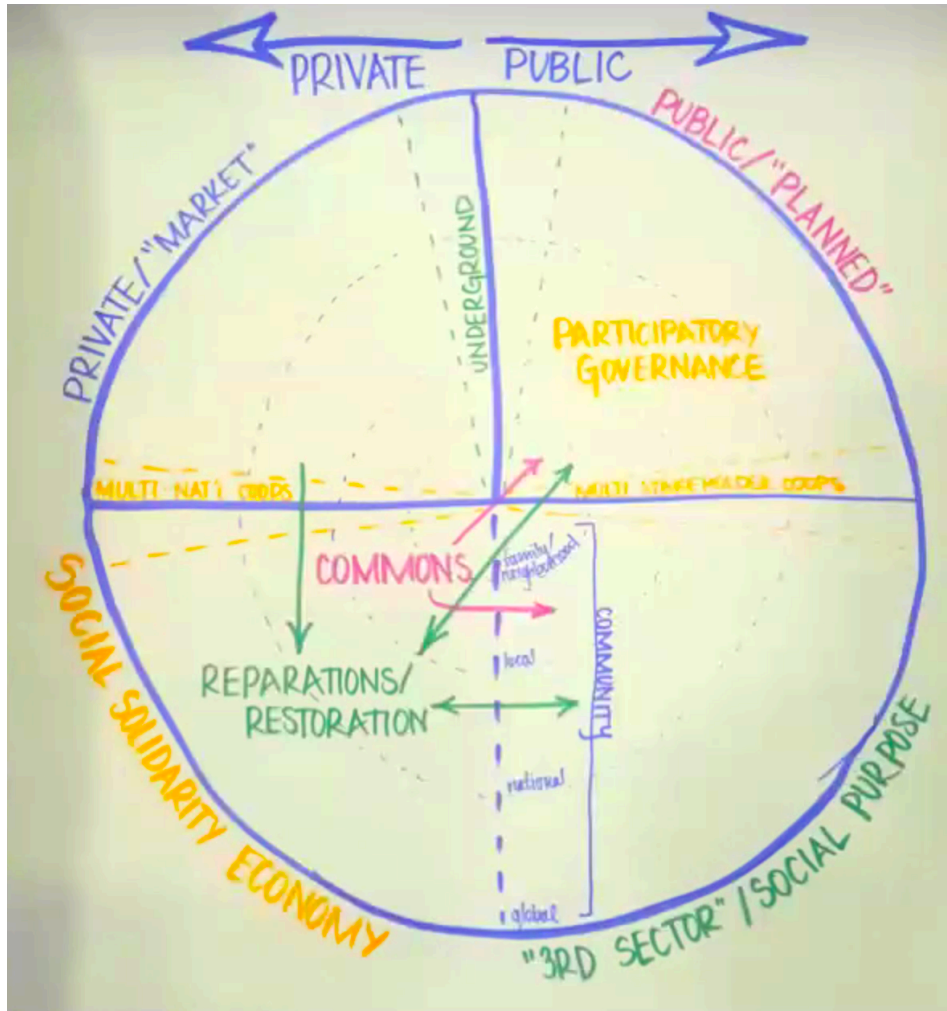
Combahee River Collective Statement:

https://americanstudies.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/Keyword%20Coalition_Readings.pdf

<https://youtu.be/OxcLjNkOlr8>
<https://youtu.be/Lh10DSqoCEQ>
<https://youtu.be/WrdSBnqnzvo>
https://youtu.be/oEoCVt_eDRg
rapper T.I. and the security worker

<https://youtu.be/Zg8esVWu0t0>
Angela Davis, Canadian Labour Congress Convention,
May 7, 2017

We must mobilize everything we can find in terms of intellectual resources in order to understand what keeps making the lives we live and the societies we live in, profoundly and deeply anti-humane –Stuart Hall



shared from the work of Elandria Williams:

2019 September

thank yous:
 Alternate ROOTS
 ROOTS digital COMMONERS
 (you know who you are!)
 Sage Crump
 muthi reed
 Kai Lumumba Barrow
 Kim Pevia
 Jean-Marie Mauclet
 Gwylene Galimard
 Edyka Chilome
 Nicole Gurgel-Seedfeldt
 Wendy Shendefelt
 Joseph Thomas
 Carlton Turner
 Nicole Garneau
 The Mamas
 Kaiden Ali
 Lauren Fitzgerald
 Lisa Q. Mount
 Paige Huerton
 Aimee McCoy
 DJ Chanel
 Yudith Azareth
 Angela Davis Johnson
 Jamie Merwin
 Sabrina Jeffcoat
 Ronya Lee-Anderson
 Alice Lovelace
 daniel johnson
 Elandria Williams
 Quita Sullivan
 Arielle Julia Brown
 Indee Mitchell
 Michelle Ramos
 Keryl McCord
 UpROOTing team
 Nayo Watkins
 Toni Cade Bambara
 Baba John O'Neal
 Alana Devich Cyril
 The Ancestors
 The Great Spirits

COMMONS closing

BSol Values

A value is a characteristic that describes what makes a solution “beautiful.”

The set of values in this book help us understand some of the most important qualities of solutions that put people and places first. It can sometimes be hard to tell the real solutions from the strategies that help one group of people while harming another. These values can serve as a guide for our own work to build solutions, and for better understanding the work that other people are doing. We made this list by talking to our advisors and contributors, and by looking at historical examples of the values held by people working to shift power in the economy, government, and culture.

BEAUTIFUL SOLUTIONS VALUES

- **Social and Economic Democracy:** Economies and societies are made up of people and communities who have control over the decisions that affect their lives.
- **Cooperation and Shared Power:** Power comes from working together with mutual respect and accountability.
- **Equity and Justice:** Everyone has access to the same rights and resources, and together we are responsible for guaranteeing those rights and resources.
- **Democratic Participation:** People have the right, ability and responsibility to participate in building and protecting their communities.
- **Sustainability:** The systems and processes that support the needs of people and the planet have the ability to keep going.
- **Many Paths:** There are lots of ways to get free, and we respect how people act in response to their own unique situations.

- **Protecting and Growing Spirit, Culture and Art:** People and communities have the power to express themselves and the right to culture, both preserving their own traditional cultures and participating in creating culture.
- **Ending Extraction:** Our solutions have to actively work to end exploitation of resources, people and labor—and the harm it does to communities—and work to create new cycles.
- **Celebrating Life:** Celebrating one another as whole people, and celebrating our connection to all other life, is at the center of our efforts to build a better world.
- **Expanding the Commons:** Our solutions increase shared control of resources like land, housing, healthcare and human knowledge, and protect our access, rights and responsibilities to use and take care of them.

Bsol Organizing Principles

An organizing principle is a guide for putting solutions into practice creatively and effectively.

The Beautiful Solutions organizing principles are inspired by the International Cooperative Association Principles, the Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing, Participatory Budgeting Principles, and other sets of principles for righteous action that have been developed through democratic processes.

- **Authentic Leadership:** We take our leadership from those most impacted by the problems we are trying to address.
- **Democratic Ownership:** We prioritize direct, local, democratic ownership and control of our lives and our communities.
- **Accessibility:** We work to support everyone as whole people, and to create a world in which everyone can take action.
- **Shared Responsibility:** We are responsible to one another, and have shared responsibility for the whole.
- **Transparency:** We listen for understanding, and we are honest with each other.

- **Right Risks:** We support each other to experiment and take risks, knowing that risk and its consequences are different for all of us.
- **Whole Communities:** We value and support our communities' well-being and culture.
- **Leadership Development:** We share leadership and knowledge across communities and generations.
- **Collective Courage:** Together, we push back against what harms us, use what helps us, and build what we need.
- **Collective Liberation:** We understand the systems we live in (including white supremacy; capitalism; patriarchy, sexism and heterosexism; and other forms of oppression) and we live our lives as acts of resistance to break down those systems.



CONTENT:

Basic proposition of a values analysis & deconstructing how we engage class:

Proposition 1. What you have determines what you get.

Proposition 2. What you have determines what you have to do to get what you get.

Manning Marable How Capitalism underdeveloped Black America set the stage for US racialized capitalism, 1983.

Walter Rodney [How Europe underdeveloped Africa](#), 1973.

Definition of Work: Work - the capacity to conceive of that which does not exist and to the effect of its realization - [Transcending Pessimism by Leo Panitch and Sam Gindin](#)

Erik Olin Wright

1work and production a definition: The ability to

2 social relations of production - This means that the power relations involved in the social relations of production concern the ways in which the activities of people are regulated and controlled,

3class relations as it relates to production. - when some people have greater rights/powers with respect to specific kinds of productive resources than do others – these relations can be described as class relations.

4 Variation in class relationship

5 Complexity of Class

6 Class agency/ Class consciousness -

a. Class interests: These are the material interests of people derived from their location-within-class-relations. “Material interests” include a range of issues – standards of living, working conditions, level of toil, leisure, material security, and other things. To describe the interests people have with respect to these things as “class” interests is to say that the opportunities and trade-offs people face in pursuing these interests are structured by their class locations. An account of these interests provides the crucial theoretical bridge between the description of class relations and the actions of individuals within those relations.

b. Class consciousness: the subjective awareness people have of their class interests and the conditions for advancing them.

c. Class practices: The activities engaged in by individuals, both as separate persons and as members of collectivities, in pursuit of class interests.

d. Class formations: The collectivities people form in order to facilitate the pursuit of class interests. These range from highly self conscious organizations for advance of interests such as unions, political parties, and employers associations, to much looser forms of collectivity such as social networks and communities.

E. Class struggle: Conflicts between the practices of individuals and collectivities in pursuit of opposing class interests. These conflicts range from the strategies of individual workers within the labor process to reduce their level of toil, to conflicts between highly organized collectivities of workers and capitalists over the distribution of rights and powers within production.

Capitalism has three sides:

- Inverse interdependence: Material well being of exploiters causally depends on the deprivation of the exploited
- Exclusion: Welfare of the exploiters depends on the exclusion of exploited from access to resources for production
- Appropriation: Exclusion creates material advantage of exploiters to appropriate the labor of the exploited

[MANIFESTO](#) roots commons, 2019

3 digital recorded kitchen table CONVERSATIONS:

edyka chilomé

kai lumumba barrow

gwylene galimard, jean marie mauclet and kim pevia



HOW DOES A SYSTEM DELIVER FOR ITS PEOPLE?

ROOTS COMMONS

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(you know who you are!)
Sage Crump
muthi reed
Kai Lumumba Barrow
Kim Pevia
Jean-Marie Mauclet
Gwylene Galimard
Edyka Chilome
Nicole Gurgel-Seedfeldt
Wendy Shendefelt
Joseph Thomas
Carlton Turner
Nicole Garneau
The Mamas
Kaiden Ali
Lauren Fitzgerald
Lisa Q. Mount
Paige Huerton
Aimee McCoy
DJ Chanel
Yudith Azareth
Angela Davis Johnson
Jamie Merwin
Sabrina Jeffcoat
Ronya Lee-Anderson
Alice Lovelace
daniel johnson
Elandria Williams
Quita Sullivan
Arielle Julia Brown
Indee Mitchell
Michelle Ramos
Keryl McCord
UpROOTing team
Nayo Watkins
Toni Cade Bambara
Baba John O'Neal
Alana Devich Cyril
The Ancestors
The Great Spirits